

# **Guidelines for Creating a Flat File Attachment of the Programming Channels for Form 325 Electronic Filings**

## **Basics**

The COALS system allows for the attachment of a flat file containing all of the programming channel information that is submitted on the “Programming Channels” page. This will benefit those filers who have software applications that already contain the information. The required file format will be *Tab Delimited* as this is a common file export format in most database and spreadsheet applications. Please refer to the tools provided with your specific data storage application for instructions about how to export your data in tab delimited format.

Note: Filers have the option of manually entering their programming information or attaching a flat file. A request to attach a flat file *will erase* any previously entered 325 programming channel information. However, users may modify or add to the content on the data entry screen after the uploading process is completed.

## File Format Layout

The ordering of the data elements and format is as follows. Note that all these fields are variable in length and will be subject to the validation requirements specified in the COALS External User Manual dated September 12, 2003. If this format is created using Excel or similar software please do not include headers. Headers will cause the data to be misinterpreted by the upload process and an error message will result. Since the data will likely be misinterpreted the content of the error message may not correctly identify the actual cause of the error. **The file extension for all uploads must be ‘.txt’.**

## File Layout for Form 325 Programming Channels

	<b>Field Name</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Possible Values</b>
1	Program Name	The call sign of the TV broadcast station (e.g. WTBS, KMBC, WETA) or abbreviation for the non-broadcast (usually satellite delivered) service distributed on the system (e.g. ESPN, CSPAN, HBO). Please do not include audio services such as FM radio or digital music services.	Char (25)	Non-Specific
2	Program Type	The type of programming	Integer	<b>1</b> – Broadcast Must Carry <b>2</b> – Broadcast Retransmission Consent <b>3</b> – Leased Access <b>4</b> – Public Access <b>5</b> – Government Access <b>6</b> – Educational Access <b>7</b> – Local Origination <b>8</b> – Cable Network <b>9</b> – Other
3	Transmission Type	Indicates whether the programming is transmitted over the system in analog (A), digital (D) or digital high definition (H) (e.g. 1080i or 720p format)	Char(1)	<b>A</b> – Analog <b>D</b> – Digital <b>H</b> – High Definition
4	Tier	The tier in which the programming is contained	Char(1)	<b>B</b> – Basic <b>E</b> – Cable Programming Services Tier (CPST) / Expanded Basic Tier <b>P</b> – Premium <b>M</b> – Pay Per View <b>O</b> – Other

## Example

wnbc	2	d	b	
wabc	1	a	b	
educational	5	h	p	
hbo	8	a	p	
hbo extreme	8	d	p	

**Note:** In the above example there is a '*tab*' between each value...not spaces.

## Data Validation

The programming channels will be subject to the same checks that are currently in the manual entry section of the Form 325. If any of the validations fail, an error message is issued and no entries in the flat file will be loaded into the database. The filer will then be required to go back to their software application, correct the problem and re-attach the corrected flat file to their submission. Additional rules are as follows:

1. No columns may be blank or null
2. With the exception of 'Programming Name' only the values shown in the chart above under 'Possible Values' will be accepted. Any other value will cause an error and a subsequent rejection of the entire flat file.

Any questions regarding this new feature should be forwarded to [COALS\\_help@fcc.gov](mailto:COALS_help@fcc.gov).